

# **SMITHA MADHAV**

Bharatanatyam Dancer, Carnatic Vocalist, Nattuvanar,  
Choreographer, Art Educator, TV Personality & Advocate

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## **BHARATANATYAM:**

Smitha has received intensive training in the various aspects of Bharatanatyam dance from illustrious gurus. She had her initial training from Sri Pasumarthy Ramalinga Sastri (Disciple of Smt. Rukmini Devi Arundale), a graduate from Kalakshetra, Chennai and a Professor of Dance at the University of Hyderabad. Subsequently she underwent intensive training in Bharatanatyam from Nrutya Choodamani Smt. Rajeswari Sainath. She performed her Arangetram at the age of 10 at Ravindra Bharathi, Hyderabad. She is an empanelled artiste of Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR) as a Bharatanatyam dancer.

## **ACADEMIC QUALIFICATIONS IN DANCE:**

Smitha has completed with distinction, the certificate course in Bharatanatyam from the Potti Sreeramulu Telugu University.

She has also completed with distinction, the diploma program in dance from the Potti Sree Ramulu Telugu University

She has also completed, the Masters program (**MA in Bharatanatyam**) from the Indira Kala Sangit Vishwa Vidyalaya, (Khairagarh University) Chattisgarh

## **NATTUVANGAM:**

Smitha has sharpened her skills in Nattuvangam as well as in the rhythmic aspects of dance. A natural flair for "Layam" coupled with rigorous training

in this subject enables her to compose rhythm scores and "Jathis" for various works.

### **PERFORMANCES:**

Smitha has rendered Bharatanatyam recitals at several prestigious centers across the globe. Her performances are acclaimed for their thorough and intensive research, extensive preparation, creative choreography and attractive presentation. She has given form to various subjects through her choreographic works.

### **CHOREOGRAPHY:**

Smitha is a creative choreographer who handles a spectrum of subjects ranging from the sacred to the secular. An ardent love for history and religion combined with a deep understanding of literature enable her to create choreographic works that are at once thought provoking and attractive.

Some of her choreographic works:

### **NAALAYIRA DIVYA PRABANDHAM:**

A dance presentation based on the sacred works of the Azhwars - Smitha has presented several pieces based on various portions of the Prabandham such as:

Periyazhwaar Thirumozhi  
Thiruppavai  
Naachiyar Thirumozhi  
Perumal Thirumozhi  
Kulasekhara Azhwar Tirumozhi  
Tirumangai Azhwar Tirumozhi

### **KAMBA RAMAYANAM:**

Smitha has choreographed several verses of Kamba Ramayanam and interspersed them with compositions of various Vaggeyakaras.

### **KESAADI PAADAM:**

A solo dance work that is based on the concluding canto of Sri Narayana Bhattadri's Srimad Naaraayeneeyam, "Kesaadi Paadam" is an ekaahaarya piece in Sanskrit.

### **SREE VENKATA GIREESHAM BHAJE:**

Inspired by the millions of devotees who make a pilgrimage to the holy shrine of Tirumala, this multi - lingual presentation is strung together using compositions of several bards such as Annamacharya, Tyagaraja, Papanasam Sivan, the Azhwars, interspersing them with pieces from the traditional bhajana padhathi

### **DIKPALA VANDANAM: A DANCE TRIBUTE TO THE DIKPALAS**

Inspired by the traditional "Navasandhi Kautuvams" performed in the temples of South India, this solo multi lingual work is based on the lore of the Ashta Dikpalakas (directional deities). Enhanced by rare stories from the Puranas, this presentation throws light on the art and science of Vaastu as well as mythology. Smitha has rendered the vocal and nattuvangam for this production herself.

### **RAAGAM RAAGHAVAM:**

Based on the myriad renditions of Srimad Ramayana, this dance feature attempts to view the Ramayana from a fresh perspective and explore the rich human values enshrined in this epic. Highlighting instances that exude love, friendship, benevolence and honesty this work uses lyrics from the works of Tyagaraja, Muttuswamy Dikshitar, Arunachala Kavirayar, Oothukadu Venkata Subbaiyer, Sadasiva Brahmendra Swamy, Mysore Sadasiva Rao, Kambar, Valmiki etc.

### **MANAGEMENT IN MYTHOLOGY:**

An attempt to appeal to the busy corporate leader who is unable to indulge his love for Indian mythology and poetry, this is a light hearted yet thought provoking solo work that talks of episodes in indian mythology that showcase modern concepts of management and leadership through rustic and simple stories. Using pan Indian music and lyrics sourced from several ancient and

contemporary texts, this production is regularly staged at several corporate events.

### **KOLARU PADHIGAM:**

A short dance feature using lyrics from Thirugnyana Sambanda Peruman's Kolaru Padhigam, this presentation glorifies Lord Shiva, extols the science behind astrology and explores the sublime link between the two.

### **AANDAAL THIRUPPAVAI:**

Smitha rendered as a dance presentation the 30 paasurams of the Thiruppavai. Produced and telecast by Bhakthi TV, this was telecast over 30 days and was greatly appreciated by the learned audiences.

### **GODHAA KALYANAM:**

Smitha choreographed and presented the famous "Vaaranam Aayiram" of Kodhai Piraatti for the Pongal celebrations of MAA TV. Interspersed with lucid narrations by the artist herself, this program, received rave reviews from the audience.

### **ABHIRAMI ANDHAADHI:**

A pure dance piece with lyrics from the Abhirami Andhaadhi and the Abhirami Padhigam, it is constructed in the format of a Varnam with verses from Aadi Sankara's Annapurnashtakam woven into the dance sequence. This item is based largely on the sthala puranam of Thirukkadaiyoor.

### **AZHAGAR KURAVANJI:**

Inspired by the rich kuravanji tradition of Tamil Nadu, this group performance choreographed by Smitha is a 100 minute version of Kavi Kunjara Bharathi's magnum opus Azhagar Kuravanji. Smitha herself has rendered the vocal and nattuvangam for this production.

### **OTHER PRODUCTIONS:**

Smitha has participated in other prestigious dance productions directed by veteran artists. She played a vital role in "Bhaaratiiyin Penniyam"

choreographed by senior dancer Smt. Revathi Ramachandran. This production was presented at the "Semmozhi Maanaadu" held in June 2010 at Kovai and was greatly appreciated by the discerning connoisseurs.

She also played the role of Radha in "Krishnam Vande Jagatgurum" choreographed and directed by Padmashri Prof. Sudharani Raghupathy. Considered a masterpiece in the world of dance, this production was presented at the 25th anniversary celebrations of the International Dance Alliance (IDA) at Chennai.

### **CARNATIC VOCAL MUSIC:**

Smitha has the good fortune of being trained by the Hyderabad Sisters, "Sangeetha Choodamani" Kum. B, Lalitha and Smt. B Haripriya who are the torch bearers of the Alaththur Baani, known for its strict adherence to tradition. Blessed with a rich voice and a vast repertoire Smitha is a sought after concert artist, whose performances are appreciated by the connoisseur and lay audience alike. She also renders the vocals for all her dance productions. She is a B-High graded artiste of All India Radio and won the 1<sup>st</sup> prize in TTDs Annamacharya Keerthana competition. She is an empanelled artiste of the Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR) as a carnatic vocalist.

### **ACADEMIC QUALIFICATIONS IN MUSIC:**

Smitha completed with distinction, the certificate course in carnatic vocal from the Potti Sreeramulu Telugu University.

She also completed with distinction, the diploma program in music from the Potti Sree Ramulu Telugu University

She has, a Masters degree (MA in Carnatic vocal music) from the University of Madras.

### **OTHER ACADEMIC ACCOMPLISHMENTS:**

Smitha holds a degree in Law from the Osmania University – a course which she completed with honours. She has also secured a master's degree in Vaishnavism – a program in which she was the University topper. She has cleared the NET examination conducted by the UGC for both dance and

music. She is currently pursuing a Phd programme in dance at the University of Hyderabad (Central University).

### **RECORDING:**

Smitha regularly lends her voice to various recording projects in different languages. Some of her recording projects include:

**Annamayya Bhavamrutham:** A collection of Annamayya Sankeertanas; some popular numbers and some hitherto unheard songs. Produced by the Sukh Shanthi Cultural Centre, the proceeds of this album are being used to support several humanitarian causes.

**Nandakam:** A selection of new Annamayya songs, set to music by Sri Rajkumar Bharathi. The proceeds of this CD are donated to several philanthropic causes.

**VAIKHANASA STOTRAM:** A collection of slokas and songs that form an integral part of the Vikhanasa Aagamam. This CD has been produced and released by the Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanam.

**VISHAMAKKARA KANNAN:** A compilation of popular songs in praise of Lord Krishna. Produced and released by the PJP trust Chennai, this album also features Smt. S Janaki and Smt. Vani Jairam. The proceeds of this album are being contributed to various charitable causes.

**ARULALA ADAIKALA MALAI:** Featuring ten songs based on Swami Vedanta Desikan's Adaikala Pattu, this album was released in connection with the great preceptor's 750<sup>th</sup> birth anniversary. With lyrics by Shri S.T. Narasimhan and music by Dr. Rajkumar Bharati this album was released in 2019.

**TTD RECORDINGS:** Smitha regularly performs in various recordings produced and released by the Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams. She has sung several compositions of Annamacharya, Tarigonda Vengamamba and slokas.

**TEACHING:** Smitha renders training in carnatic vocal music to aspiring students. Her fresh outlook and youthful approach endear her to the younger generation and make her a sought after teacher.

### **TELEVISION & FILM WORK:**

Smitha strives to take the fine arts of India to a larger audience through the electronic media. She makes a constant effort to reach out to a cross section of viewers through her television and media work. Some of her works in this area include:

She played the lead role of Sita in Shri MS Reddy's National Award winning feature film **RAMAYANAM** in 1996.

**ANNAMAYYA SANKEERTHANARCHANA:** Smitha hosted a successful season of this music - based program for the Sree Venkateswara Bhakthi Channel, an arm of the Tirumala Tirupathi Devasthanam. She had the good fortune of working in association with stalwarts including Dr. Pappu Venugopala Rao.

**BHAKTHI THIRU VIZHA:** Produced and telecast by Star Vijay TV, this program has been hugely successful with the Tamizh audience. A combination of Sorppozhivu (discourse) and music, this program has been telecast multiple times by the channel

**KRISHNA VIJAYAM:** Produced by Star Vijay TV, this program, was telecast in connection with the Gokulashtami celebrations of the channel.

**SANGEETA SANGAMAM:** Smitha coordinated and presented several episodes of this concert - based program, that showcased young talent in Tamil Nadu. Her rendition of old classical film numbers was widely appreciated by the viewers.

**NAVARATHRI - SHUBHARATHRI:** Telecast on Star Vijay TV, this program, featured Smitha rendering several songs on *Alaimagal*, *Kalaimagal* and *Malaimagal* in connection with the Navaratri celebrations of the channel

**AANDAAL THIRUPPAVAI:** Smitha rendered as a dance presentation the 30 paasurams of the Thiruppavai. Produced and telecast by Bhakthi TV, this was telecast over 30 days and was greatly appreciated by the learned audiences.

**GODHAA KALYANAM:** Smitha choreographed and presented the famous "Vaaranam Aayiram" of Kodhai Piraatti for the Pongal celebrations of MAA TV. Interspersed with lucid narrations by the artist herself, this program, received rave reviews from the audience.

**NAADA NEERAAJANAM:** Smitha presented "Sri Venkata gireesham Bhaje-a pilgrim's progress" for the the 2nd anniversary celebrations of the Sri Venkateswara Bhakthi Channel. Following wide acclaim this program was re-telecast on the channel.

**KALAAKSHETRAM:** Smitha is hosting several episodes of this art-based program for the Sri Venkateswara Bhakthi Channel. An attempt to revisit the glorious art forms of India, this program is going to be telecast in SVBC.

**MUVVALA SAVVADI:** Smitha hosts and anchors this classical dance based contest for Doordarshan Saptagiri & Yadagiri.

### **FOREIGN TOURS:**

Smitha's artistic work has been recognized by the overseas audience. She has performed at several global art centers. Some of her foreign tours include:

- \* Nepal
- \* Indonesia
- \* Singapore
- \* Vietnam
- \* Australia
- \* Germany
- \* United States Of America
- \* United Arab Emirates (Dubai)

In one of her tours of the United States, Smitha rendered over 35 music and dance recitals in aid of Vegesna Foundation, a non- profit organization in Hyderabad. She was honored as the "Distinguished Visitor" of the cities of Charlotte and Dallas.

### **INTERNATIONAL COLLABORATION :**

Smitha has collaborated with internationally renowned artistes for the choreography for the Hollywood blockbuster Life of Pi. She has worked with acclaimed Balinese (Indonesian) dancer Putu Evie and Gamelan player Vaughn Hatch on South East Asian Dance forms. She has collaborated on a widely acclaimed jugalbandhi with Shri Deodutt Persaud a Germany based Kathak exponent



## **TEACHING:**

Smitha is a dedicated Guru and strives to pass on the classical performing arts to a large number of national & international students. She is the Founder & Director of Varna Arts Academy which imparts training in the fine arts of India. Several of her students now pursue successful performing careers. Headquartered at Hyderabad, Varna has its branch in Chennai.

## **ACADEMICS:**

Smitha was a student of the Hyderabad Public School, Nasr School and St. Marys Junior College. She completed her LLB from the Omani University. A gold medallist all through her school and college years, she was awarded the Pratibha Scholarship by the Government Of Andhra Pradesh for all 5 years of the law course. **She enrolled as an Advocate in the year 2006.**

## **OTHER:**

Smitha represents the city of Chennai as its cultural ambassador to San Antonio, Texas in the sister city agreement between the two cities.

She is empanelled with the Indian Council for Cultural relations.

She won the gold medal in the Inter University competition conducted by the Tirumala Tirupathi Devasthanam

## **AWARDS & RECOGNITIONS:**

\* Bala Chaitanya Award for outstanding performance in Bharatanatyam by Aradhana Cultural Association.

\* Ugadi Puraskar from Madras Telugu Academy

\* Guru Sishya Parampara Award by Vamsee Art Theatres & Raga Sapthaswara to Smitha and her Guru

\* Women's Achiever Award From Sri Nara Chandra Babu Naidu, Hon'ble CM of

Andhra Pradesh

\* Kala Shravanthi Award by Annamacharya Vignana Peetham, Cudappah, in recognition of excellence in Music and Dance.

\* Ugadi Purashkar Award by Natya Ravali Academy of Dance, Vishakapatnam.

\* Yuva Kala Bharati, from Bharat Kalachar, Chennai

- \* Natya Bhairavi Award from Sri Bhairavi Gana sabha, Chennai
- \* Women's Achiever Award from STAR Vijay TV.

### **Select Performances:**

- \* Natyanjali, Chidambaram
- \* Sree Tyagaraja Aradhana, Tiruvaiyyaru
- \* Sri Shanmukhananda Sabha, Delhi
- \* Shanmukhananda Sabha, Mumbai
- \* Mamallapuram Pongal Dance Festival
- \* Sri Krishna Gana Sabha Chennai
- \* Yuvotsavam - Department of Culture, Government of AP
- \* TTD Brahmotsavam, Tirupati
- \* Saraswati Gana Sabha, Kakinada
- \* Ramakrishna Mission, Singapore
- \* Global Conference organized by Tata Institute Of Fundamental Research (TIFR)
- \* Brahma Gana Sabha Chennai
- \* Thyaga Brahma Gana Sabha Chennai
- \* Waldorf International Conference
- \* MAA TV Ravindra Bharathi, Hyderabad
- \* Naada neerajanam, Tirumala ( Special program for 2nd anniversary celebrations of Sri Venkateswara Bhakti channel)
- \* 25th Anniversary Celebrations of the International Dance Alliance (Krishnam Vande Jagat Gurum as Radha)
- \* Semmozhi Maanaadu with senior dancer Smt. Revathi Ramachandran in the production "Bharatiyin Penniyam"
- \* World Economic Forum, Dubai, UAE.
- \* Ramayana Festival of Kalavardhini, Music Academy, Chennai
- \* South Indian Cultural Association, Hyderabad.
- \* Kalasagaram, Secunderabad.
- \* Ramanavami Festival, Hyderabad.
- \* Department of Culture, Government of Andhra Pradesh.